

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

## Protect the Environment

AND

## U.S. Military Readiness

### **Vote YES on H.R. 4546: The Bob Stump National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003**

Dear Colleague:

To win the War against Terrorism and prepare for future battles, the United States military must be trained and ready. The cornerstone to military readiness is realistic training – America's soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines must be able to train as they fight.

However, outdated environmental laws are increasingly restricting the U.S. military's ability to train. H.R. 4546, the Bob Stump National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003, includes a number of targeted, common sense provisions intended to restore balance between protecting the environment and military readiness.

H.R. 4546 includes provisions to:

- **Build Buffer Zones:** The bill includes two provisions to allow DOD to transfer land around military installations to conservation groups. These groups, such as The Nature Conservancy, will manage the land to protect critical habitats and prevent urban encroachment around military bases.
- **Amend the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA):** A federal court recently closed the Navy's training range at Farallon de Medinilla – the closest range to Afghanistan – because it ruled that the Navy was in violation of the MBTA. H.R. 4546 would close the loophole that led to this ruling. Without the change, the MBTA will be used to stop military aviation and live-fire training worldwide.


- **Amend the Endangered Species Act (ESA):** H.R. 4546 would establish a responsible alternate approach to ESA management of DOD lands. Rather than relying upon a patchwork of ESA habitat designations, H.R. 4546 would require DOD and state and federal Fish and Wildlife Services to establish a mutually approved comprehensive plan for managing critical habitats on military installations.

The provisions contained in H.R. 4546 are modest, bipartisan efforts to protect the training that makes America's military the best in the world, while continuing to preserve our environment. We urge your support for the bill - a vote YES is a vote to restore a balance between protecting the environment and military readiness.

Sincerely,



Joel Hefley  
Chairman  
Military Readiness Subcommittee  
Armed Services Committee



Solomon P. Ortiz  
Ranking Democrat  
Military Readiness Subcommittee  
Armed Services Committee